



METROPOLITAN
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COMMISSION

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Memorandum

TO: Advisory Council

DATE: March 5, 2008

FR: Valerie Knepper

W. I. 1611

RE: The Choice to Reside in a Transit Oriented Development: Study Update

Background

As described to this group last year, MTC is engaging in a study regarding how people chose to live where they do, and the implications for encouraging transit oriented development in the Bay Area. In particular we are studying, through a survey:

- Why do some people choose to live in transit-oriented developments?
 - What are the characteristics of various groups of people who prefer TOD?
 - What are the defining factors in their choice?
- Why do some people choose to not live in transit-oriented developments?
 - What are the characteristics of various groups of people who do not prefer TOD?
 - What are the defining factors in their choice?
 - What factors of TOD might be amenable to change that would influence various groups to find TOD more favorable?
- What does this say about the market shares for TOD in the Bay Area, now and in the future?
- How do people who live close to transit choose their travel modes?
- What are the policy implications of the market shares for TOD, the projected future market shares, and the mode choices patterns in the Bay Area?

This study will provide a better understanding of market segments of people attracted to transit oriented development (TOD), levels of satisfaction and sources of dissatisfaction, factors of attraction of TOD, travel modal shares by TOD residents, and recommendations for policies to improve the attractiveness of TOD and transit mode share of people living in TODs. We will be developing, conducting and analyzing a telephone survey as a primary element of this effort.

People to be Surveyed

Based on the input of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members - a good variety of people with different perspectives, including academics, developers, transit agencies, cities, and other interested stakeholders - we have decided to focus the survey on people who have moved recently or are actively looking to move soon.

Focus Groups - to help shape surveys

We have held three guided focus group meetings – on Nov. 8 and 13, and then a final one on Jan 28, 2008 – to help us shape the survey by hearing from diverse members of the public regarding factors of importance in their recent or upcoming move. The focus members were selected to represent a variety of family types, ages, income levels, ethnicities, renters and owners, and location of residence.

We specifically explored:

- General perceptions regarding housing in the Bay Area,
- Key reasons for moving,
- Experiences in searching for housing,
- Factors in choosing their housing,
- Specific characteristics they considered in choosing their housing,
- Reaction to specific factors; and
- Response to the concept of transit oriented development.

The participants filled out two questionnaires regarding key factors and importance of a number of listed factors. We also used these focus groups to test the language that we are considering using in the surveys to determine if the terms communicate effectively and consistently for people from different backgrounds and experiences.

Draft Survey Questions

The consultants have refined the survey questions, and are in the process of conducting the pretest of the survey, including questions and methodology. The survey questions include factors of neighborhood characteristics, home characteristics, financial considerations, regional accessibility, lifestyles, schools and other variables of interest in selecting a home.

Next Steps

Following evaluation of the pretest of the survey, expected to be completed by the end of March 2008, we will make any necessary modifications to the survey and methodology, and expect to conduct the survey in April – June 2008. We will then analyze the results, producing an examination of market segments with interest in TOD and groups with potential interest in TOD with key factors of concern. We will be analyzing the features of TOD that have the greatest impact on residents' travel mode choice and attitudes.

Following the survey, this study will be assessing how people who live close to transit choose to travel, based on further analysis of other recent surveys. We will mine the market research results from three of the consultant's previously completed Bay Area surveys - San Mateo County Transit District, San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority, and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. Using this data we will identify respondents who live in TODs, and then analyze their choice of travel modes. This information will be used to help determine the primary factors that contribute to use of alternative travel modes in TODs, and will be used to better define how to create successful TODs.

This work effort will culminate in identifying the key public policies, actions, and performance measures that are needed to support and encourage investment in TOD under the range of attributes and features. The Advisory Council will be a crucial partner in the task of identifying policies and actions that would support successful TODs.

AGENDA ITEM 7

We will hold two workshops to review draft findings from the competitive positioning exercise, and to brainstorm ideas for additional TOD attributes and transportation features. These workshops will target a mix of public sector stakeholders, private sector developers, and non-governmental organizations with an interest in TOD. We will be looking to the Advisory Council to assist in identifying key participants.

Finally, we will develop a “Briefing Book” summarizing this information in a graphically attractive format, including photos and stories from individuals, and recommendations based on the study. We will be looking for the Advisory Council to provide input as to how the report can communicate most effectively.

A general schedule is shown below, with preliminary indications of key times for Advisory Council and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) input, for discussion and comment.

TASK	DATE	REVIEW
Preliminary electronic file of survey responses-midpoint and technical memorandum summarizing survey progress	May 2008	MTC staff
Electronic file of survey responses-completion and survey report	July 2008	TAC to review preliminary responses and provide comments/ questions
Preliminary summary of survey responses	September 2008	TAC/Advisory Council to review preliminary results and provide comments/ questions
Summary of the travel mode choice of TOD residents and relevant factors, identification of potential workshop participants and outline of process	November 2008	TAC/Advisory Council to review preliminary results, recommend participants/process for the workshops, and provide comments/ questions
Summary of competitive positioning performance measures and public protocols to support TOD	December 2008	TAC to review preliminary results and provide comments/ questions
Memorandum summarizing the findings of the workshops, focusing on potential policies, actions, and performance measures for inclusion in the Final Report and Briefing Book	February 2009	TAC/Advisory Council to provide input on potential policies, comment on draft briefing book
Final report, briefing book, Power Point	April 2009	Briefing to TAC/Advisory Council and MTC Planning Committee